

insect boxes for Maple Woods State School, a school for the developmentally disabled, in Kansas City, Missouri. Griff also designed a curriculum for the students and delivered nine classroom presentations for the students.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Richard Griffith Kesler for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN SOLEMN REMEMBRANCE OF
THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
HALABJA MASSACRE

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 15, 2013

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in solemn remembrance of the 25th anniversary of the massacre of over 5000 innocent civilians in the Iraqi Kurdish city of Halabja by the criminal regime of Saddam Hussein. This atrocity took place on March 16, 1988, during Saddam's genocidal Anfal Campaign to exterminate or expel the Kurdish people of northern Iraq. The Halabja massacre is worthy of our remembrance for several very important and timely reasons:

First, the Halabja massacre is one of the few examples of use of chemical weapons by a government against its own people in the history of mankind. Iraqi forces used a lethal mix of nerve agents, asphyxiating gas and other toxins to inflict over 5000 deaths and thousands of permanent injuries on survivors. The attack on Halabja continues to inflict its toxic legacy on the Kurds today in the form of birth defects and disabilities of Halabja survivors. As we monitor the unfolding events in Syria and Assad's threatened use of chemical weapons against his own people, we are reminded of the Halabja massacre. In the course of the Anfal campaign, the Iraqi Army committed countless atrocities, razed thousands of Kurdish towns and villages, forcibly displaced thousands of families from their homes and livelihoods and murdered an estimated 200,000 Kurdish men, women and children. Halabja was perhaps the single worst day of the Anfal campaign. The suffering, death, crimes and horror of that day were famously documented and burned into the consciousness of the world by a Time Magazine cover and feature article which contained scores of ghastly photographs, many of which were used by prosecutors to secure the convictions and executions of Saddam Hussein and General Ali Hassan al-Majid, known as "Chemical Ali." I can never forget—and the world must never forget—those haunting images of dead children in the lifeless arms of their mothers, their mouths frozen open in their final desperate attempts to breathe. A crime of this magnitude must never be forgotten and must never be allowed to happen again.

Second, the 25th anniversary of the Halabja massacre is worthy of our remembrance and reflection because thousands of Americans gave their lives to liberate Iraq and give the Iraqi people the freedom and opportunity to create a stable, safe and prosperous country where all minorities can flourish. Over four thousand Americans died and over 40,000 were wounded in that war to secure the peace

to bring Saddam to justice, and win the right of self-determination for the Kurdish people of Iraq and for all Iraqis. Their sacrifices must never be forgotten.

Third, it is important to remember Halabja, because of America's strong and vital relationship with the Kurds of Iraq. In the immediate aftermath of the first Gulf War, Saddam again unleashed his wrath on the Kurdish people. Thousands of Kurdish refugees fled into the mountains of northern Iraq to escape another massacre. The United States intervened in Operation Provide Comfort to join forces with the Kurds and to prevent another massacre. Under the umbrella of the no-fly zone of northern Iraq, the resilient, strong and resourceful people of Kurdistan rose from the ashes of the Anfal campaign to restore their land and lay the foundations of democracy and prosperity for all of Iraq. When US forces deployed to northern Iraq in 2003 as part of Operation Iraqi freedom, Kurdish forces joined with US forces to defeat 13 Iraqi Army divisions in the northern area of operations. Today, the Kurds are continuing to build on their friendship with our country and have created an economic and cultural miracle in the Kurdistan Region, where the rights of religious and ethnic minorities are protected and respected in law and in fact, which is a model for all of Iraq to emulate.

Finally, as we remember Halabja and the Anfal campaign on this 25th anniversary, we must maintain our resolve and use all of our diplomatic and economic power to ensure that peace and democracy take root and thrive in Iraq. That peace and the future of democratic government in Iraq is now jeopardized by the increasingly negative relations between the Iraqi government of PM Maliki and the Sunni and Kurdish minorities of Iraq. It is not my purpose today to cast blame for the current state of those relations, but only to remind my colleagues of the grave dangers of ethnic and sectarian strife in Iraq. Let us remember Halabja in light of the sacrifices our country has made to ensure that such crimes are never repeated and to renew our resolve to use our power and influence to achieve a lasting peace and the security of the Iraqi people.

IN RECOGNITION OF RENOVATING
HOPE

HON. TOM REED

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 15, 2013

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Renovating Hope, a nonprofit organization that assists America's heroes in need. Renovating Hope's mission is to provide professional and sustainable home repairs and renovations to families of men and women currently serving in the armed forces, as well as veterans. This organization delivers renewal and hope to the members of our military who are in need of assistance, and provides comfort to their families.

I recently had the privilege of observing Renovating Hope's service and commitment to our military heroes in my district. The organization developed a project to remodel the home of Retired Army Sgt. Robert C. Costley, a Purple Heart Award recipient who was critically wounded by a roadside bomb during his

tour in Iraq. The renovation of Sgt. Costley's home in Erin, New York, would not have been completed without the leadership of Renovating Hope and the hard work of countless volunteers from the community.

I am proud to recognize the efforts of Renovating Hope in assisting our military heroes, and I commend their dedication to giving back to the individuals who have given so much of themselves to serve this great country. This organization truly exemplifies the commitment to serving the men and women of the United States military. As Americans, we should strive to emulate this commitment every day.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 15, 2013

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, March 14th, 2013, I missed rollcall vote number 70 for unavoidable reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

Rollcall No. 70: "yea" (On ordering the previous question.)

RECOGNIZING DAVID LEONG

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 15, 2013

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize long time family friend David Leong, a truly unique American hero who has become a local Springfield legend for his creation of Cashew Chicken.

Born in Guangdong, China, David immigrated to the United States in 1940 and later went on to serve his new country during World War II. He trained in Fort Lee, Virginia for 3 months before shipping out to Europe. He participated in the Normandy invasion where he hit Omaha Beach as part of the fourth wave of troops. By the war's end, he had served in England, France, Italy, and Belgium.

David and his late wife, Wong Shau Ngor, are the proud parents of seven: the late Wing Cheong Leong; Evelyn Leong Mousted; Wing Ling Leong; Wing Yee Leong; Yim Fong Leong; Wing Loke Leong; and Wing Wah Leong.

In November 1963, David opened Leong's Tea House, a 350 seat white tablecloth restaurant on the edge of town in what had been a cornfield in Springfield, Missouri. When he started the restaurant he knew that most people were not familiar with Chinese food, but they loved fried foods. He decided to come up with a recipe that combined both worlds together. He created a cashew gravy from soy and oyster sauce, added stock, and poured it over fried chicken, creating the immensely popular Cashew Chicken. There are now over 300 restaurants in the Springfield area that serve it.

He decided to close the original restaurant in December 31, 1997, following the death of his beloved wife. After falling ill in 2009, David decided he wanted to open a new restaurant to keep busy. Two years of success at the new Leong's Asian Diner inspired David to